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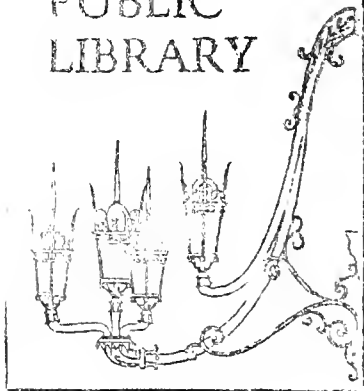
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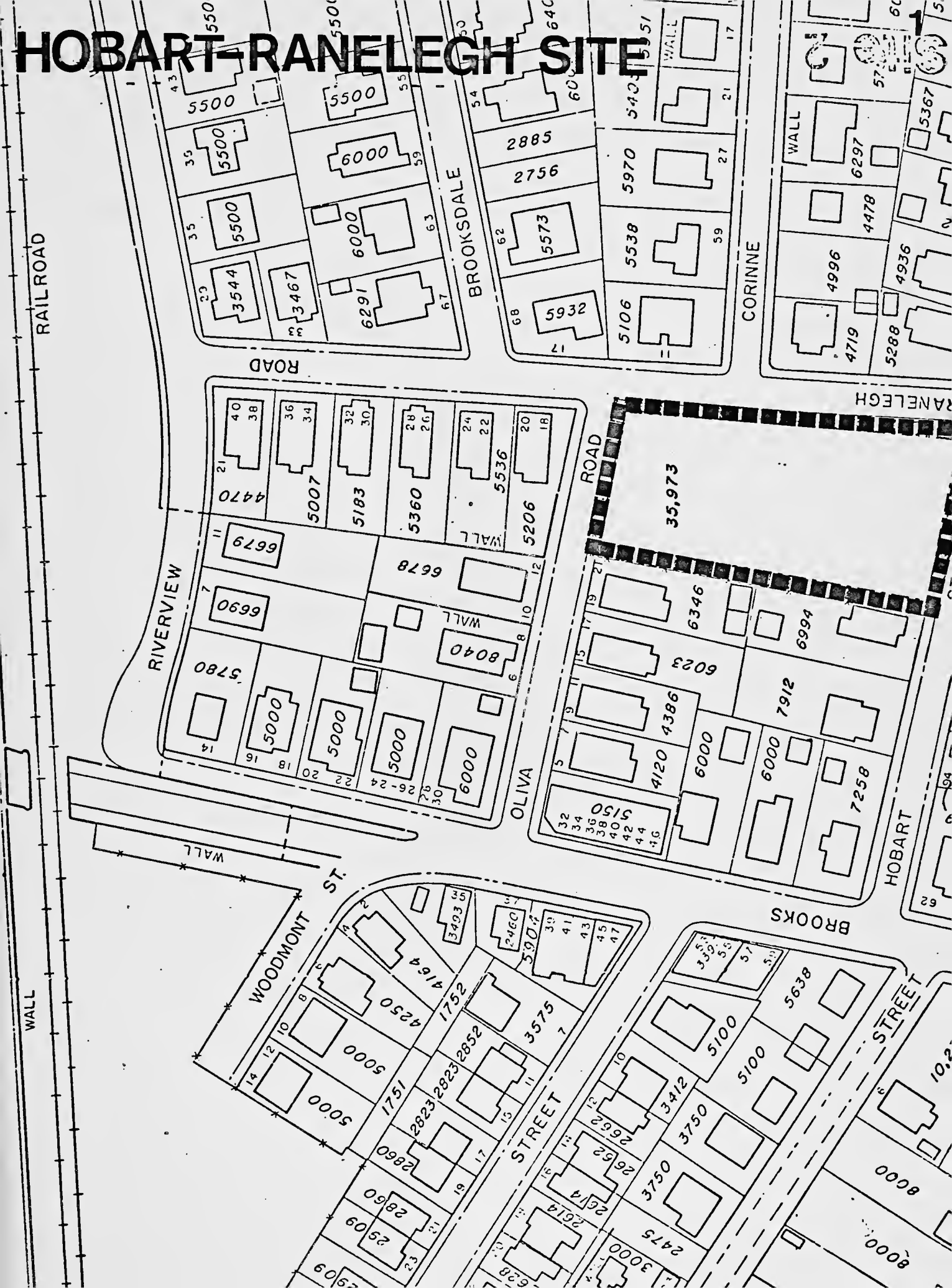
BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT

BRA
120

William J. Sullivan

This report was prepared in the District Planning Division of the Planning Department by Laurence Koff under the direction of Robert A. DeSimone.

HOBART-RANELEGH SITE



I. Background

The Hobart-Ranelegh site consists of 35,973 square feet located at the corner of Hobart and Ranelegh Streets in Allston-Brighton. (See Map 1) The lot was formerly occupied by a school. The building has long been demolished. The site is now used as a playground even though it is poorly maintained and lacking in facilities.

While the property is presently under the jurisdiction of the Public Facilities Department, interest in developing the site for either a neighborhood park or elderly housing has been expressed by two other City agencies (The Parks and Recreation Department and the Boston Housing Authority). A critical need for both uses now exists in Allston-Brighton. This study is an attempt to evaluate the merits of both alternatives as they might be pursued at this particular site location.

II. Analysis

A. The Need for a Neighborhood Park

1. Results of Field Survey

A field survey of the Hobart-Ranelegh site by BRA Planning Department staff indicates a large number of children playing in the "park". In other words, children live in the area and irrespective of the site's physical condition, consider as fact that the site is a city park. In addition, the area surrounding the site is a stable residential neighborhood seriously deficient in open space and play areas for children.

2. Standards for Locating Parks & Playgrounds

The open space standards shown in the Appendix indicate that there should be a neighborhood park and a playground every $1/4$ - $1/2$ mile. A neighborhood park requires one acre of land, a playground three to five acres.

A review of the size and facilities of open space in the Faneuil district indicates that there is a need for a neighborhood park at the Hobart-Ranelegh site. This conclusion is based on the fact that there are no neighborhood parks within a $1/4$ mile radius of the Hobart-Ranelegh site (See Map 2). While the Oak Square, Roger's, McKinney and MDC

FANEUIL DISTRICT

2



Adjacent Parks
& Playgrounds

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

parks are within a 1/2 mile radius of the Faneuil neighborhood, they serve different needs and a wider area.

3. Standards Used to Establish Need for Parks and Playgrounds

The 1960 Census indicated that the Faneuil district had a total population of about 10,000 people. The relevant characteristics of this population are that they have the lowest median age of any area in Allston-Brighton, that thirty percent of the total population is 14 years or younger, and that the area ranked fifth of the six areas in Allston-Brighton in total number of residents 65 years and older.

One can conclude from these statistics that the Faneuil area is a family orientated neighborhood which requires park space for youngsters and family orientated activities.

B. The Need for Elderly Housing

The need for elderly housing in the City is best described by the fact that Boston has a three year waiting list of elderly who desire admission. Allston-Brighton contributes greatly to this demand. The over 65 population was the only age group in Allston-Brighton to show an increase between 1950-1960. In fact, between 1940 and 1968 the number of elderly persons in Allston-Brighton doubled. The Faneuil neighborhood, on the other hand, does not have a significant need for elderly housing. The 1960 Census showed that the Faneuil district had less than 1,000 elderly residents. This is the second lowest number of elderly in all the districts of Allston-Brighton.

III. Evaluation

In determining the best use of the Hobart site one must weigh the need for park space in the Faneuil district against the demand for elderly housing in Allston-Brighton and the City as a whole.

The preceding analysis has indicated that there are very strong pressures for both uses. One way of judging their competing merits is to evaluate the most suitable use of the site itself.

1. 1.
2. 2.
3. 3.
4. 4.
5. 5.
6. 6.
7. 7.
8. 8.
9. 9.
10. 10.

A. Suitability of Site For Elderly Housing

1. The site is rather isolated in terms of the needs of the elderly. Although there are a few convenience stores near the site, there are no major shopping and cultural facilities in close proximity. The presence of a bus line on Hobart Street, on the other hand, minimizes this liability.
2. The site itself is under an acre in size. If elderly housing was to be constructed, it would have to be either high rise, or a series of row-houses in order to be economically feasible and conform to the needs of the older residents.
 - a. High Rise This alternative assumes a building between six and eight stories in height. (i.e. about 75 units, with a cafeteria and 16 off-street spaces.)

The major effects of this type of development would be the elimination of all open space except for an area about the size of a basketball court, a building shadow, which would affect abutting two-family residences, and perhaps more important, the establishment of a precedent of high rise buildings at a F.A.R. of 2, within a single family residential area.

- b. The rowhouse alternative assumes two-story attached dwellings. This site plan would provide about 28 dwelling units and parking for six cars. There would be no cafeteria.

The effect of this development would be the elimination of all available open space and the establishment of a project with a floor area ratio of one. The district presently is zoned R.5.

B. Suitability of Neighborhood Park

The Hobart-Ranelegh site is under an acre in size. The topography varies between a level area facing Hobart Street and a steep slope at the corner of Ranelegh and Oliva Streets.

A site of this size is suitable for a variety of open space activities. These could include tennis courts, a basketball court, and sitting and play areas.

The Hobart-Ranelegh site fulfills the open space requirements of the Faneuil residential area. The site is well located and easily accessible, and it is of sufficient size to meet the needs of the residents for a neighborhood park.

IV. Conclusion

There is a need in Allston-Brighton for both open space and elderly housing. The issue is which use is most suitable for the site.

A. The preceding discussion indicates that:

1. the residential alternative is not well situated for the needs of elderly persons,
2. it will require, in the case of the high rise site plan, a density which is totally out of character for the Faneuil neighborhood and the Hobart-Ranelegh site, and
3. it will lead to, in the case of the rowhouse alternative, the complete elimination of all available open space.

B. The open space alternative, on the other hand, is

1. well located for the open space needs of the residents,
2. is of sufficient size to fulfill these needs, and
3. a program is available, Urban Beautification, which can provide the funds to ensure that the necessary improvements will be made.

APPENDICES

1. Faneuil Neighborhood Open Space Facilities
2. Open Space Standards
3. Population Characteristics, Faneuil Neighborhood
4. Allston-Brighton Elderly Population

APPENDIX 1

Faneuil Neighborhood: Open Space Facilities

I. Rogers Playground

8.2 acres, slight incline, grass, trees,
good condition

1 open shelter
12 unit swing
1 metal climber
1 slide
basketball area
2 tennis courts
large ballfield
field house
 1. toilets
 2. showers

II. McKinney Playground

5.94 acres, level, paved, grass

ballfield - 3 diamonds
tot area
6 swing unit (2 broken)
1 slide
1 climber
1 see saw (no boards)
1 open shelter

III. Oak Square Playground

1.48 acres, paved, trees

benches
1 slide
6 unit swing
5 climbing bars
dirt baseball area

APPENDIX 1 continued

IV. Charles River Embankment (MDC)

10 acres, level, grass, trees

football field - seating

baseball diamond - lights

skating rink

swimming pool

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

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APPENDIX 2

Open Space Standards

Facility Type	Standards For Locating Parks and Playgrounds		Standards To Establish Need for Parks and Playgrounds	
	<u>Size</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Pop.</u>	<u>Acres/1,000</u>
Playgrounds	3-8 acres	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	10-12,000	.40-.60
Neighborhood Parks	1-5 acres	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	10-12,000	.40-.60

Playgrounds refers to facilities of between 3 and 8 acres designed primarily for the active play of children between 6-13 years. Space and equipment for informal games, softball and basketball are provided as a minimum. Larger facilities (over 6.00 acres) can support baseball or football. Often, facilities for play of very young children or of teenagers are included.

Neighborhood Park refers to 1-5.-- acre facilities geared particularly to the young and old and to neighborhood activities. Usually landscaped, neighborhood parks may also be very urban in character. They may combine areas for active play of children with areas for quiet games and social gathering of adults.

APPENDIX 3

Faneuil Neighborhood

Population Characteristics - Age Distribution*

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Total Population</u>
under 5	1109
5-9	928
10-14	799
15-19	648
20-24	642
25-29	704
30-34	631
35-39	623
40-44	547
45-49	587
50-54	549
55-59	533
60-64	472
65-69	394
70-74	277
75-79	165
80-84	98
85	<u>54</u>
Total	9760

Median Age - 28.6 Male 32.5 Female

APPENDIX 4

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON ELDERLY POPULATION

AREA	POPULATION	RANK	CENSUS TRACT
South Allston	2848	1	Y-3A, Y-3B
Faneuil	988	5	Y-4
Oak Square	604	6	Y-5A
Aberdeen	1180	4	Y-5B
Chestnut Hill	1830	2	Y-5C
North Harvard	1257	3	Y-1
North Allston			Y-2

Transportation

MBTA operates one "Green Line" street car line on Commonwealth Avenue. The district is also served by seven additional bus lines.

Income Under \$3,000

<u>Census Tract</u>	<u>No. of Incomes</u>
Y-2	212
Y-4	205
Y-1	159
Y-5A	75
Y-3A	418
Y-3B	317
Y-5C	277
Y-5B	240

Income Under \$3,000 to \$5,999

<u>Census Tract</u>	<u>No. of Incomes</u>
Y-5C	971
Y-3A	971
Y-4	899
Y-3B	896
Y-2	710
Y-5B	665
Y-1	381

ELDERLY POPULATION AND INCOME

Tracts Y-3A and Y-3B have the highest amount of elderly (2,848) and the lowest income (under \$3,000; 735)

Tract Y-5C has 1,830 elderly and 277 families make under \$3,000.

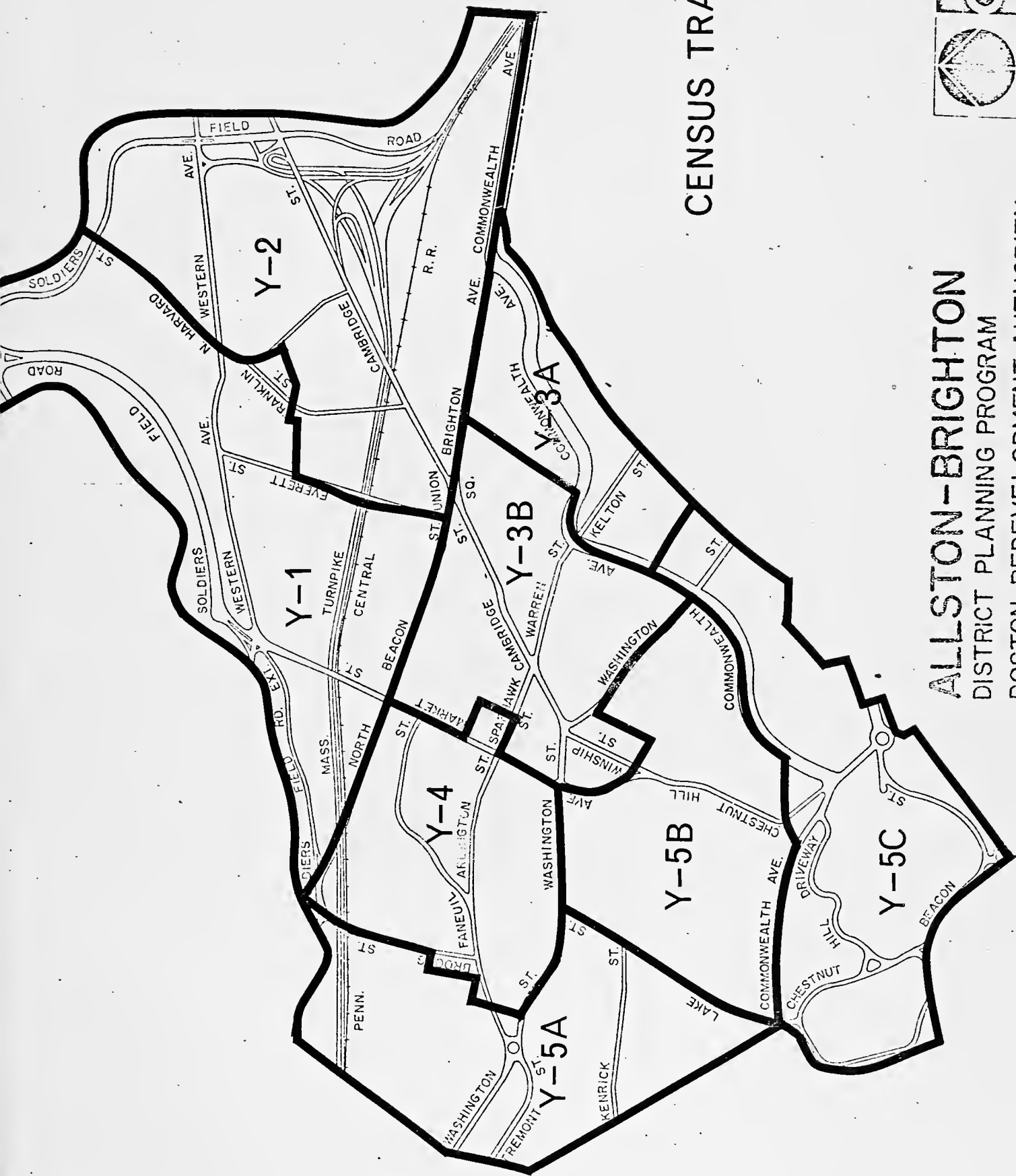
Tracts Y-1 and Y-2 have 1,257 elderly and 371 families make under \$3,000.

Tract Y-5B has 1,180 elderly and 240 families make under \$3,000.

Tract Y-4 has 98 elderly and 205 families make under \$3,000.

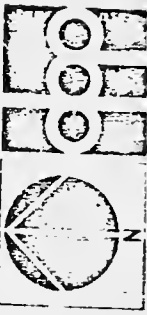
Tract Y-5A has 604 elderly and 75 families make under \$3,000.





CENSUS TRACTS

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON
DISTRICT PLANNING PROGRAM
BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



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